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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6295
INFO RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA PRIORITY 0159
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 3202
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 0280
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA PRIORITY 0329
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 0339
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0020
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY 1389
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY 0011
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0310
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 0052
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY 0682
RUEHN/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 0273
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0219
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 0269
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 1067
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 0121
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 000845

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DEPT AF/E FOR BYODER, AF/RSA FOR MBITTRICK
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SUBJECT: TANZANIA: VIEWS ON ERITREA-ETHIOPIA BOUNDARY
IMPASSE

REF: SECSTATE 076306

Classified By: DCM D. Purnell Delly for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

Tanzania will support, but not lead, efforts to resolve
impasse

¶1. (C) On June 11, the Deputy Chief of Mission raised the Eritrea-Ethiopia boundary impasse with Ambassador Charles Sanga, Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (reftel). Sanga described the issue as a regional one to be addressed within the African Union (AU). He told the DCM that President Jakaya Kikwete wants to encourage peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and has influence in the AU to do so.

¶2. (C) Recalling President Kikwete's outspoken opposition to Bashir as AU Chairman (comment: and perhaps Kikwete's role in recent SADC mediation efforts with Mugabe), Sanga explained that "some quarters believe that Tanzania is trying to become famous" as a peacemaker by meddling in other states' affairs - a reputation Tanzania is anxious to avoid. As such, Tanzania is willing to support action within the AU to resolve the boundary impasse, but is not inclined to play a highly visible role. The DCM replied that the United States was reluctant to play a lead role itself at the moment, and therefore looked to widely-respected African leaders such as Kikwete to help break the impasse, suggesting Kikwete could raise the dispute informally with Isaiah or Meles when they next meet.

Boundary dispute "camouflaging" bigger conflict: Somalia

¶3. (C) Sanga stated that the relationship between Eritrea and Ethiopia has been complicated by both countries' interest in Somalia, and that the boundary dispute is now "camouflaging" this larger conflict between the two. The boundary dispute must be addressed in the context of Somalia if progress is to be made, he said, although he questioned whether Eritrea and Ethiopia were ready to resolve the issue.

The DCM emphasized that it was precisely because Somalia had raised tensions between the two countries that a first confidence-building measure of some kind was important. While the odds were long, first steps of whatever nature to resolving the boundary dispute might lead to longer term relaxation of tensions between the two countries, an objective all countries in the region share.

¶4. (C) Sanga noted that there is a "problem from within" Eritrea, referring to the will of President Isaias Afwerki to end the impasse, and he criticized Eritrea for harboring Somalis affiliated with the Islamic Courts. However, he stated that because Ethiopia is the larger player, it should take the lead in resolving the various issues between the two countries.

¶5. (C) Sanga said Tanzania continued to attach importance to UNMEE, and would support renewal of its mandate.
DELLY